

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent** - Once, when visiting a Faith Formation class, the students of the class came up with a rather creative way of looking at what the Season of Lent is all about. We've all been raised with the idea that we should give up something for Lent. And many people still give up things like candy and sweets, pop, and the like. But giving up such things during Lent – what's that got to do with our Spiritual Journey and growing closer to God and one another. This particular class's catch-line for Lent was "Yank a weed and plant a flower seed." Kind of catchy – don't you think? What are the "weeds" / the sins, the vices in our lives that keep us from being as Christ-like and loving as we could be? What are the "flowers" / the virtues, the kindly acts that we could plant in our lives to replace the "weeds?"

In addition to August 6, the remembrance of the Transfiguration of Jesus occurs every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent. As Jesus begins His public ministry He takes Peter, James, and John with Him up on a mountain to witness His glory. He is comforted and assured by His Father's voice. This is a moment of truth, a moment of transfiguration. This gives Him the strength He needs to continue a journey that will lead to the cross. In our own lives as well, we need to know the love that God has for each of us. We need to be reminded that we have been created by Him and chosen in love. Today the apostles see the glory of our Lord. They want to remain in this beautiful place as long as possible. It is Peter who speaks up: "let us stay here, and I will set up camp." The impetuous apostle does not realize the significance of the moment. Just as Abraham imagined that the Lord would take his son, Peter imagines that they had already reached the end of their journey. Jesus has been acknowledged as the Chosen One of God – witnessed in the presence of the apostles and the great prophets Moses and Elijah. Jesus' next "transfiguration" will take place at Gethsemane, the cross and finally the risen glory of Easter morning.

As we continue our pilgrimage through this Lenten Season, we look within ourselves for the strength we need to follow the way of the cross. We need a reminder of God's love in every moment of our lives – in the joyful and celebrating moments, as well in the not so joyful, the sad and heavy moments. Such reminders can come to us thru the embrace of another person, thru a pat on the back or a word of encouragement. Similarly, each of us has the capability of building others up, of showing them the love of Christ by our actions and our lives. Thank God we do not struggle alone. Like Christ we each have moments of transformation along the way of faith that leads us to Easter.

In our Spiritual Journeys, we should have individuals who are not afraid to be our confidant, and whom we are not afraid to have them tell the truth about us to us. Such truth can help eliminate the weeds / the sins and vices as we replace them with virtues that reflect the Love of God that we received in Baptism. Such "weeding" can be, at

times, painful – much like carrying the cross. And yet, such needs to be done if we are going to have a weed-free garden. Spiritual transformation is more than a fleeting moment. For Christ, it is the start of a long journey of endurance towards another hill and a more painful spectacle that leads to our freedom. Peter hopes that the moment will last. But Jesus reminds him that there is still work to be done and that they must come down from the mountain. Each of us also eventually learns that lesson. We savor the spiritual "highs" when they occur and wish that they would never go away / that we could "set up camp" and stay a while. Like Peter, we need to be reminded that we have to "come back down to earth" and get on with work the work that purifies us / the work that leads others to God and lets them know of His love and care for them. If we always stayed on that mountain, we wouldn't be assisting Christ with the building of the Kingdom. We would be savoring the moment solely for ourselves rather than sharing His love with others as we are meant to be doing.

As we think of the Transfiguration of Jesus, we think of how we can be "transfigured" thru our Lenten Spiritual Exercises" – transfigured to be more Christ-like and loving, and caring. To become more like Him, we do need to eliminate from our lives all that is not of Him and replace it with His love.



**"The Transfiguration"**  
**From a window at St Regis Church, Trafford, PA**